Leicester, Dec. 18/71.

Dear friend Webb;

When Mr. May came here she mentioned one day that you wanted a copy of Henry Colman's "European Agriculture". I had a copy of it myself, & resolved ~~that~~ you sh^d have it provided I could not find another for you. I have made inquiry, in Boston & elsewhere, as I had p^p^, and hear of only one copy that there is any chance of my getting - & that is in Worc^r, & the owner has not quite decided whether he cares to part with it or not. But last week. Before return^g from Greenfield & Brit. with her a copy of Mr. Colman's "European Life & Manners; in Familiar Letters to Friends" - in 2 Vols. large 12^mo^; & Mrs. May is quite convinced this is the work you want, & not the "Europ. Agric" - and I suppose so, too. But the sure way is to ask you; and we will send you the one, or the other, or both, as you may wish. The "Life & Manners" begin with London and its Environs, Hampton Court, Windsor Castle, Eton, - with visits to various seats of Noblemen & Gentlemen; then Doncaster, Chatsworth, Haddon Hall, Matlock; Sheffield - Dundee - Edinburgh - &c. &c. Manchester - York - Duke of Portland's estates - Shops - Ways of Living - Incomes - Education - State of Society - Servants; - Cambridge - Oxford -; Parliament; Southampton, Isle of Wight, Winchester; - Dublin; O'connell; Donnybrook Fair - Irish hospitality, scenery, agriculture - Limerick, Killarney, - Cork - Armagh - Belfast. - &c. &c. Then Scotland again - Ayr. Glasgow, &c. So. West of England, Plymouth, Torquay, Cornwall. - London & its life, &c. are continually coming in. - The above is key to 1^st^ volume, & I have just skimmed its long list to give you a general idea. But Mrs. May is so sure that you will like to have this, whether this be what you ask^d for or not, that she thinks it had better go without delay; and by the 1^st^ ship from Boston, I will endeavor to send it, - about 2/3^ds^ of the 2^d^ Vol. are given to the Continent.

I wrote you 8 or 10 days since, & mentioned a parcel of letters I had found, – wh. you had sent to me at the time of the M. D. Conway & Mason business, – autographs of J. Bright & G. Thompson, & letter fr. H. Martineau by hand of her niece, &c. I shall hear from you about them in due time doubtless.

I now enclose to you a letter I rec^d., 2 days since, from S. H. Gay. I doubt not it is true, as he says, that no one can understand the nature & force of the blow wh. has fallen upon Chicago, & heavily upon one hundred thousand people there, who is not there to see for himself.

We are having a hard & cold winter. It set in early, about 25th Nov^r, & has continued without interruption until now. Our venerable & kindly neighbor, Rev. Dr. Nelson, died 7 days since, and his funeral services took place on Saturday last, – at the Church; – the day being very windy & rough, but a large C^o. present. Today we expect to hear of the Prince of Wales's death, – the reports & official bulletins for several days past indicating that result as at hand.

Later. Our morning paper says the Prince was lying, without change, at 6 o'clock this morng. (13th) – or, if any change, symptoms a little more favorable.

In Boston, just now, is another Royal scion – "the Grand Duke Alexis", 2^d. or 3^d. son of the present Emperor of Russia. I saw him last week – a fine, sturdy, wholesome-looking fellow, a lieutenant in their Navy. Boston is greatly stirred at his presence, & has shown him some very handsome attentions.

To day I have come back to me, from New York, a letter which I wrote & addressed to

Mr. Edmund Harvey there about 2 weeks ago. It was not call'd for, it seems. I will try again, perhaps, — both there & in Boston.

Bessie has been making a 2 weeks' visit to her Aunt (Louisa Davis) at Greenfield; & has come back in good spirits to wake us up again. We also have with us a very agreeable & intelligent lady, — a special friend of Ade's, — Mrs. Briggs of Springfield. And we have a visitor far more rare than any other we have had for the year, viz. my mother, who has not been able to come to see us before for some 3 years. It was a great surprise to me, when she ~~proposed~~ proposed to come, at this rough & cold season. But it has been effected, with comparative ease to her, and no untoward result from the journey, so far as now appears — and she has been here now the 5th day. She will be 84 yrs. Ad, day after tomorrow, — is feeble, as a general rule; but has borne this ride surprisingly well.

Will you give our best love to Deborah, and to Alfred, & be sure of your own share.

With Affectionate regard, Yours

S. Mary.

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